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Commemorating Black History Month

By John McKay

It was not business as usual that day in February.

Agencies in the State Office Building came together as one in celebration of Black History Month with a number of special exhibits and honorary speakers.

"This is such a wonderful event," said DAS' Isabelle McKinney who heads the agency's Diversity Council. "Being able to celebrate a sampling of culture with everyone here really educates people on how much African-Americans have contributed to society."

Most prominent was the unveiling of the Langston Hughes postage stamp commemorating Black History Month. Hughes, considered one of the most important American writers of the 20th century, joins 24 other notable Americans in the Black Heritage commemorative series including: Martin Luther King, Jr., Benjamin Banneker, Dr. Carter G. Woodson, Madam C.J. Walker, Malcolm X (El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz), Patricia Roberts Harris, and Roy Wilkins.

The events were not only connected to Black History, but also dedicated to raising the awareness of health concerns among minority populations.

"Every January I take some time off to get myself checked out," said Public



Left: the unveiling of the postage stamp commemorating Langston Hughes. Below: one of the many displays employees enjoyed.



Works Commissioner Ted Anson. "It's so important to monitor your health – especially for African Americans. With diabetes and high blood pressure being prevalent in minorities, it's just as important to look ahead to your future while we look to the great successes of our past."

continued on p. 2

Other honorary speakers were Eric Coleman, Assistant House Majority Leader, and Toni Nathaniel Harp, Assistant Senate Majority Leader. Harp, who also chairs the legislature's Public Health Committee, spoke in detail about the importance of proper health care and education for all minorities.

Informational booths were set up on prominent minority health concerns such as diabetes and hypertension.

Post office representatives also made Langston Hughes postage stamps available for sale, and down in Room G-38B tables selling African-American artwork, clothing, and jewelry were on display. DAS' own resident craftsman Lori Coleman hosted one of the booths and said later, "everyone had been very supportive and interested in her work."

DAS Times

The *DAS Times* is published monthly
by the
Department of Administrative
Services
Communications Office
165 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

John G. Rowland
Governor

Barbara A. Waters
Commissioner

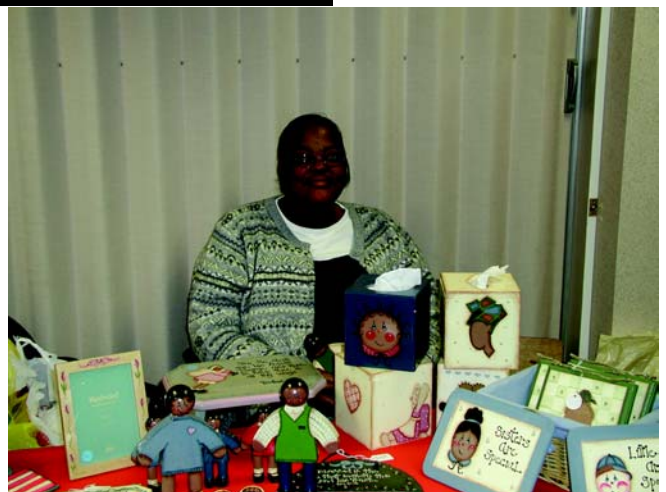
Donna J. Micklus
Editor

*Contributions are welcome but may be
edited for space and clarity.*

Visit our website at
www.das.state.ct.us

DAS Commissioner Barbara Waters thanked Isabelle McKinney for "doing such an outstanding job representing DAS."

"This occasion was not only important as a day of celebration and recognition, but also as an expressive precursor to future DAS Diversity Council events," Waters said.



Commissioner Kristine Ragaglia from the Department of Children and Families commended **Michael Guimond, Larry King, Art Paulette, Steve Dygus, Carol Biernacki, Joe Holloway, Barry Graugard, Carol Wilson, and Joe Giliberto** for “their assistance with a number of unique service purchases. We looked to DAS and its many faceted areas of procurement for efficiency, expediency and cost-effectiveness, and as always our partnering has brought about success.”

Employment Developer Holly Cohen from Look Forward applauded **Phil Karas** for “speaking to the program participants about state employment opportunities and providing an excellent and thorough explanation of the state’s employment website. His positive attitude greatly enhanced the comfort level.”

Diane Donato extended her thanks to all of the **DAS employees** who assisted with the DAS 2002 Affirmative Action Plan. “This project is a team effort and I appreciate being able to count on all of you for your input and help in gathering all of the information.”

President Joe Veneziano from JCV Investment Systems praised **Steve Dygus** for his prompt follow-through with a complaint of a driver from another agency. “It is reassuring to see that responsible people are running the state.”

Steven Shapiro from the Department of Information Technology thanked **Patsy McLaughlin** for conducting the Interviewing Skills training for managers and supervisors on January 29 and February 21. “We all left the class with

valuable knowledge and interviewing tools.”

Tony Sebastiano from the Education Connection in Litchfield commended **Maureen Friedman, Teresa Dupont, and Laurie Melesko** for their presentation on the *CtGovCenter* for online purchasing. “Our group was very pleased about their ability to use the system for their programs. Many managers were very impressed, so thanks for making that happen for us.”

Jean Bostrom thanked **Dick Omohundro** for his assistance with the Trust BCT system. “BCT for October 1, November 1, and December 1 were processed without a snag due to the expertise and diligence on Dick’s part. This is the first Avatar/Trust bill. Thanks for making it so easy!”

Kenn Stephenson praised **Matt Shea** for all of his work with the e-surplus system. “I have repeatedly asked for input into this system by our customers and now, thanks to you, we are able to see these suggestions come to life.”

Linda Hubeny applauded **Janet DelGreco** and **Juliet Colebrook** for “all of their assistance when I’d call frantically to get equipment in. They both worked with me to get the purchase order to the vendor in a timely manner so I can have equipment here in time to make changes that should resolve our network problems. Thanks!”

Office Manager Dianne D. Martiner from the Visiting Nurse Association Community Healthcare, Inc. thanked **Maureen Friedman** for her assistance with a Haworth furni-

ture contract. “We had the opportunity to take advantage of this contract and were able to save over \$130,000 on purchases. I would be happy to serve as a reference for your procurement program.”

Hats Off

By Cindy Rusczyk

Alan Williams from the Department of Environmental Protection complimented **Don Casella** for his work with a seven-member team to evaluate an RFP for open space GIS mapping. “We have never been involved in the process, and Don has done a tremendous job leading and facilitating this group through a fair and equitable decision-making process.”

Kudos to **Nancy Jones** from Phil Karas for the Hearts in Bloom fundraiser that she conducted for donations to the American Heart Association. “Sometimes these things go unnoticed. Great job!”

Director of Communications Nuala Forde from the Department of Information Technology (DOIT) praised **Donna Micklus, Cheryl Sawina, Cindy Rusczyk, and Nancy Jones** for their support and assistance with DOIT’s Governor’s Service Award program this year. “The professionalism, courtesy, and responsiveness extended by all of you was off the charts, and made this year very special for our rather large team.”

No postage necessary... anymore

Up until two weeks ago, DAS Human Resources was mailing out examination announcements and bulletins to state agencies and community organizations...to the

year in hard costs such as paper, envelopes, mailing labels, printing and postage,” said HR’s Dr. Pamela Libby.

“In addition, we’ll save about 60 days per year of staff time in copying materials and preparing the mailings, which means a ‘soft’ savings of \$8,500,” Libby said.

All that translates into the elimination of some 17,000 pieces of outgoing mail per year, a reduction in the amount of mail processed by the DAS mailroom and a subsequent savings for that business as well.

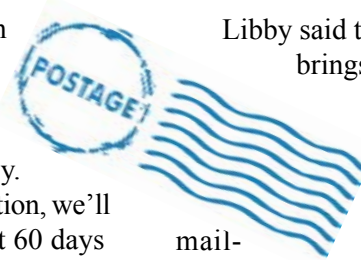
Libby said the new system also brings other advantages.

Agencies and community organizations receive the

mail- ing immediately with no delays in posting due to mail processing. Second, DAS is able to increase its distribution list at no extra cost.

“Hopefully this will result in a more diverse and qualified pool of applicants for State of Connecticut positions,” Libby added.

Libby said that the success of this project is credited to HR staff Michelle Burns and Robin Riddlesworth with expert technical assistance from MIS’ Chris Smith.



Victories

By John McKay

tune of 431 locations, 40 times per year.

The concept of e-mailing or faxing those same materials seems exceptional in its mere simplicity.

“We expect that this will save DAS approximately \$13,000 per

DAS announces new workers' comp administrator

By John McKay

DAS has signed on with a new Third Party Administrator (TPA) for the State of Connecticut’s Workers’ Compensation Program.

The new TPA is GAB Robins North America, Inc./ MedInsights, a global organization with an extensive background in administering and managing workers’ compensation claims.

“GAB Robins brings with it a state-of-the-art integrated Automated Claims Information System for its claims/medical case management staff,” said Worker’s Compensation manager Joe Prevuznak.

“It will provide a very sophisticated web-based claims management and reporting tool via its Clientelligent system,” Prevuznak added.

Through its wholly owned subsidiary, MedInsights, which is headquartered in Tennessee, GAB Robins will provide a First Report of Injury hotline, telephonic case management, utilization review, medical bill review and field case management.

The new TPA’s Connecticut office is located in East Hartford. Staffing represents a significant

increase in resources over that of the former provider and includes: One Operations Manager, Three Claim Supervisors, 26 claims adjusters, four medical-only claim adjusters, nine claim assistants, three hearing representatives, six clerical support and a Qualify & Performance manager.

GAB Robin’s East Hartford Office can be contacted through a toll free number 866-422-7622.

New claims should continue to be reported to the 24-hour claims reporting center at 1-800-828-2717.

Master of the moguls

Speed skater, professional moguls skier, freestyle skiing coach, and mother. Believe it or not all of these descriptions fit one person.

Donna Wadhams of DAS' Financial Services Center has been competing in winter sports since she was 11 years old.

"It all started at our local ice rink in Utica, New York," said Wadhams. "I had been skating recreationally for about two years when the Utica Speed Skating club showed up at the rink for their practice. My mother and I stayed to watch them practice and one thing led to another and sure enough I was racing right along with them." Wadhams said she was pretty much hooked on it right from the beginning.

"I don't know what it is, but I just loved competing. It's so fun. I could never get enough of it." And by sheer luck the indoor speed skating nationals were going to be held in Utica that season.

"Unfortunately, I had to watch from the stands," said Wadhams, "But it was then that I knew I wanted to compete with the best."

Wadhams then attended a summer training program in Springfield, Massachusetts and returned to the sport that winter to compete as best she could.

Over the next few years Wadhams competed in two speed skating national

"As much as I loved the skating competitions, the social aspect was also great," said Wadhams.

"We all had this great relationship where we were all competing for the same goal, but were able to remain the closest of friends."

Eventually she knew she had gotten as far as she could in speed skating and started looking to other winter sports.

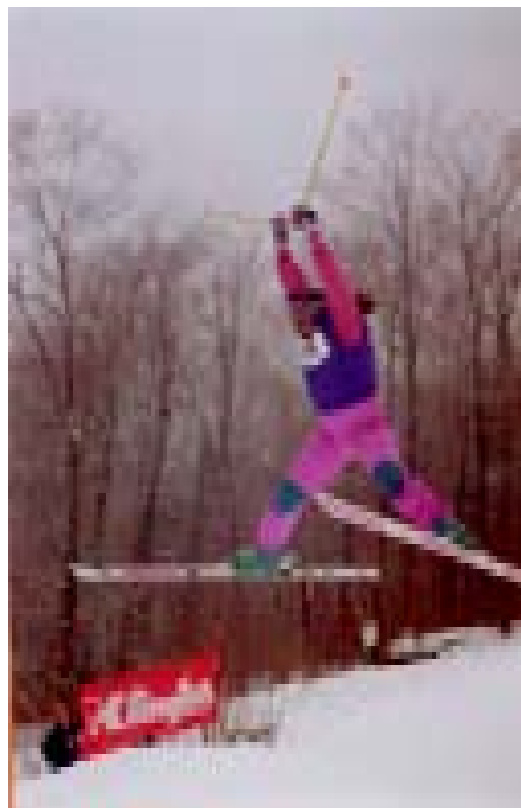
A friend of hers introduced her to skiing where she quickly got the nickname "Demo Donna" as she leveled seven people in one trip down the mountain!

Wadhams got much better after that. She eventually got into bumps, or moguls as they are now called, and entered her first competition in 1980 at Bear Mountain in Killington, Vermont.

From 1990 to 1992 Wadhams was on the pro mogul tour winning cash and prizes and traveling everywhere from Hunter Mountain in upstate New York to Breckenridge and Vail, Colorado.

1991 was a very successful year for Wadhams, winning five out of five competitions throughout the state of Vermont, and making the final four in two professional meets she competed in Colorado.

Some of her other accomplishments in mogul skiing include back to back victories at the Bear Mountain Mogul Challenge where the course "Outer Limits" is considered one of the most difficult courses in the east. If you were to check out the trophy displayed at the Bear Mountain Lodge, you



FSC's Donna Wadhams in action

would find her name on it for seven different years.

Now, in addition to recreational skiing, her time is dedicated to coaching the Killington Hopeful Freestyle Skiing Team – a team of kids who have about two years of ski racing experience, but are now advancing to freestyle moguls.

"Of course I have a personal interest in it because both my sons are into it. But to take these kids who are more used to racing and see them hitting the moguls and practicing their aerials is so rewarding. Plus, when their parents come up to me and thank me for all the work and confidence I've instilled into their kids – there's no better feeling."

Wadhams feels if she can put a little bit of her experience and wisdom into kids to give them an extra edge in competing, there'll be no limits for them.

Up Close

By John McKay

competitions and two North American competitions. North American competitions include Canadian speed skaters as well.

Core-CT: How's it goin'?

By Cathy Daly and Donna Micklus

Daly says some "lucky souls" may be hearing from her

SLC Director Cathy Daly has been doing a lot of commuting between DAS and the DOIT office in East Hartford. But it's looking more and more like she'll be spending increased hours

across the river. Daly, who is one of the Project Directors for Core-CT, gave us some recent insight as to the status of the project.

Daly said that the Project Directors have recommended to the Steering Committee a revised schedule for implementation of the new system.

"While this schedule has not been finalized, it is the current

thinking in terms of timing for each of the Financials and HRMS implementations," Daly said.

According to the plan, Financials would be the first modules put into production in the summer of 2003.

General ledger, accounts payable, accounts receivable, purchasing, e-procurement and reporting would be implemented in this first phase.

HRMS functions would be implemented several months later in the fall of 2003.

Functions covered by the initial implementation of HRMS would include the bulk of payroll, time and labor, benefits, human resources and reporting modules.

The second phase for HRMS would include competency management, training administration, self service, labor relations and career management. The target date for these implementations would be the summer of 2004.

A second phase of Financials would be implemented in the fall of 2004, which would include projects, grants, asset management, inventory, billing, and contracts.

Daly said she is recruiting people to come on to the project to do training development and delivery.

"Some lucky souls may be hearing from me. It will be an assignment of approximately 18 months," Daly said.

She explained that all project staff remain on the payroll of their home agency and will return there after the project is completed — unless there is a role in the post-production support team that they wish to apply for.

On Air...On Line DAS, Channel 3 collaborate on job postings

By Donna Micklus

Usually the news media call us *for* information....rather than offer it.

But that wasn't the case recently when WFSB representatives approached DAS to offer their new job website for state government postings.

WFSB is launching a new jobs initiative that combines Internet and television recruitment. "We get unlimited job postings and we have the opportunity to enumerate on the many benefits of state service," HR's Dr. Pamela Libby said.

DAS' Recruitment Staff develops the job postings from information provided by the hiring agencies. They then send the information to WFSB

who enters it on their website under the category of "government."

The Internet postings are only one facet of the overall recruitment strategy. DAS will also appear on a new Channel 3 show CTJOBSHOW that will be aired on Sunday morning beginning this spring.

"We'll get a four-minute segment on selected shows to talk about state government employment opportunities, and our DAS logo will be shown in on-air promotions," said DAS Director of Communications Donna Micklus.

"Anytime we can increase our market audience, we jump at the opportunity," said Libby.

DAS is laying down the law. The Human Resources Business Center hosted two Law Enforcement Career Fairs in March for multiple job opportunities in the state's law enforcement arenas.

The first fair was held at Manchester Community College on March 2, and the second at Housatonic Community College in Bridgeport on March 9.

"Turnout was really good," said DAS' Recruitment Specialist Patsy McLaughlin.

"We had about 300 people show up at the Manchester fair. Not to mention the countless applications that were filled out online." (*The Bridgeport career fair had not occurred when the DAS Times went to print*).

Interested applicants who couldn't make either career fair had the opportunity of filling out the proper forms on the DAS website.

The fair encouraged candidates to meet representatives from Departments of Public Safety, Correction, Motor Vehicle, Children and Families, Mental

Health & Addiction Services, UConn Health Center, and the University of Connecticut campus police to discuss law enforcement opportunities.

Also on hand were members of the Department of Correction SWAT team and the state's mobile crime lab.

"It helps to have more than just a few booths lined up," said McLaughlin.

"People were really interested in the SWAT team dogs and were curious to see how the mobile crime lab worked."

"This was great teamwork between DAS' Human Resources and Communications

Office as well as other state agencies to get the word out about what the state has to offer," said HR's Dr. Pam Libby. "Turnout has been way above expectations, and the other agencies we've been working with are very happy with the success of the fair."



DAS hosts Law Enforcement Career Fair

By John McKay



Norwich garage gets a facelift

By John McKay

"It's like night and day," said one Norwich Garage Fleet employee. He's right.

The newly revamped Norwich garage is far cry from what it was a year ago.

Natural lighting – lighting in general – streams through the new garage work bays.

Fresh paint, resealed floors, and the completion of a formal office and waiting room have not only given the Norwich garage a new look, but a new feel as well.

"I just can't believe how much

better this place is now, what a great work environment," said Fleet's Tom Yuhas.

"From what it was, to what it is now, is an amazing thing," said Commissioner Barbara Waters.

"I just hope that these changes make employees happier to work, to be at work, and give a more professional appearance to their customers. I really think we've accomplished that."

